

Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)

WISE COUNTY/TOWN OF BIG STONE GAP WATER SHORTAGE

SITUATION REPORT # 36

1200 Hours December 2, 2005

New Information in Bold Italics

The next Situation Report will be 7 December 2005 at 1400 Hours information should be submitted to the VEOC by 1200 Hours. Next Conference Call is scheduled for 7 December 2005 0930 Hours.

SUMMARY

The town of Big Stone Gap continues to experience water shortages due to drought like conditions. Actions are being coordinated with surrounding communities and the state to alleviate the adverse conditions.

EXECUTIVE ACTION

EOC Activation: The Virginia EOC is at Increased Readiness condition and augmented with limited staffing.

State of Emergency: On October 7, 2005, Governor Mark R. Warner declared a state of emergency to exist for Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to assist these localities in responding to a critical water shortage. Governor Warner directed appropriate assistance be rendered by agencies of the state government to respond to needs in Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to alleviate adverse conditions created by the water shortage. Executive Order 99 (2005) was amended to include an Open Burning Ban on Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap.

Protective Actions: Local Emergency Declared: Wise County declared a local emergency on September 26, 2005.

WEATHER

Forecast: **Friday 2 December** - Partly cloudy, high temperatures low to mid 30s, west winds 10 to 15 MPH. Friday night - Partly cloudy, low temperatures low 20s, west winds 10 MPH or less. **Saturday 3 December** - Mostly cloudy, high temperatures low to mid 40s, southeast winds 5 to 15 MPH, slight chance of rain, snow and light sleet in the morning, then rain likely in the afternoon. Little or no snow and sleet accumulation. Chance of precipitation 60%. Saturday night - Rain, low temperatures mid to upper 30s, southwest winds 5 to 15 MPH, chance of precipitation 80%. **Sunday 4 December** - Mostly cloudy with rain likely, high temperatures low 50s, northwest winds 10 MPH or less, chance of precipitation 60%. Sunday night - Rain likely, low temperatures mid to upper 30s, chance of precipitation 70%. **Monday 5 December** - Mostly cloudy, high temperatures upper 30s, slight chance of rain showers in the morning, then a slight chance of rain showers and snow showers in the afternoon, chance of precipitation 50%.

OPERATIONS SECTION

Local Liaison: VDEM Local Support Services Division Region Four Coordinator is assisting Wise County local officials.

EMERGENCY SERVICES BRANCH

ESF 4 – Firefighting: Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF)
The VDOF has signs in place notifying residents of the burn ban.

ESF 8 – Health & Medical:

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

VDH continues monitoring absenteeism in Big Stone Gap schools. No new cases of chickenpox reported, **VDH ends surveillance today**. Environmental Health Specialist monitoring permitted food service establishments to ensure compliance with regulations and plans; no problems have been encountered. Two sample kits are available to sample additional raw waters sources. VDH is compiling results from several sites, including mine water sources. As of yet, the unused/closed well systems in Appalachia, Virginia have not been tested due to lack of the electricity and operational pumps. Once electricity is restored and pumps are operational, the water will be tested. Linden Mine is still proving to be the best source of water. Radiological reports are still pending, but are expected to be in soon. VDH suggests getting a process in order for these alternative sites, in the event that the cave runs dry.

ESF 13 - Public Safety & Security:

Virginia Department of Military Affairs/National Guard (VDMA/VNG)

The VNG continues the blivet support mission. Eleven blivets are in place. Ten soldiers currently on mission. Coordinated blivet removal schedule is as follows:

Bullitt Park (2)	To Be Determined
Shelter-East Stone Gap (1)	Blivets can be removed at any time
Powell Valley Schools (3)	December 9, 2005
DMME and MECC (1)	December 13, 2005
Nursing Home (1)	December 14, 2005
Hospital (1)	December 15, 2005
Powell Cave Number 1 (2)	December 15, 2005

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT BRANCH

ESF 1 – Transportation:

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

VDOT has four message boards in the Big Stone Gap area and messages are being changed frequently so members of the community do not become complacent. A VDOT tractor is being used to pull stainless steel tankers of water.

Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC)

The Virginia Department of Corrections transported 195,000 gallons of water 1 December 2005.

LOGISTICS SECTION

ESF 7 – Resource Support:

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

The VEOC is coordinating requests for assistance from the locality and state agencies, and is facilitating conference calls with the locality and state agencies.

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Current Powell River stream flow is **34 cubic feet per second**. ***The water treatment plant is currently producing 900,000 gallons of water.*** Outdoor pumping operations have been winterized using shelters with heat to protect from freezing and all systems are being monitored 24/7. ***Some freezing occurred overnight on 1 December 2005. The same difficulty is expected 3 December 2005 as temperatures drop to 23 degrees.*** Vendor is making modifications to electric pump that was purchased by Big Stone Gap for cave pumping operations and expect to have pump installed 2 December. Big Stone Gap extended the leases for the portable water treatment plants through 10 January 2006 and purchased enough additional filter modules for the two portable plants to bring them up to maximum filtration capacity. ***After the Incident Management Team Meeting on 29 November 2005 it was determined that a long-range plan outline and tasking needs to be completed.***

There is no date set for the implementation of the Dorchester connection to the PSA, i.e. cost and completion time-line. This connection could supply approximately 250,000 gallons of water per day to Big Stone Gap. This would be at a minimal cost, due to above ground pipes between Norton and Big Stone Gap that can be reused. Norton and Appalachia continue to remain optimistic that they can continue to supply water to Big

Stone Gap for at least the next 20-30 days. Norton, Appalachia, Lee County PSA, and Scott County PSA are contributing a total of 450,000 gallons of water per day to Big Stone Gap. Meters are located on the connection, prior to entering the Big Stone Gap system. ***Installation of filters for Powell River Plant was completed. The flow from the river has increased, therefore decreasing the amount of water obtained from Appalachia to 75,000 gallons of water a day. The Town of Big Stone Gap hopes to continue to decrease the dependency on Appalachia.***

The Virginia Army National Guard continues to pump approximately 80,000-100,000 gallons of water per day from Powell Valley Cave Number 1. An electric pump is on order and should arrive this week.

Mountain Empire Older Citizens (MEOC) continues to work with senior citizens who are considered at risk and low income to provide them with bottled water.

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